Proposal of Bihar Government for conversion of wasteland into agricultural land

†2297. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Bihar have sent any proposal to the Central Government for converting wasteland into agricultural land;

(b) if so, the action being taken by the Central Government on the proposal and details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL): (a) to (c) The Government of Bihar have sent proposals for development of wasteland under the Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP) in respect of Purnea, Kishanganj and Saran districts. These proposals have been examined and deficiencies conveyed to State Government for suitably revising these proposals.

Proposals for Swajaldhara Scheme from Karnataka

2298. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) when the Swajaldhara Scheme was launched;

(b) how many proposals seeking funds for executing drinking water projects have been sent by the Karnataka Government;

(c) whether the Government would provided 90 per cent for the total funds required for implementing drinking water schemes; and

(d) the number of proposals of Karnataka so far cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL): (a) to (d) Swajaldhara was launched on 25.12.2002 by Hon'ble Prime Minister. 60 proposals out of 110 proposals sent by the Government of Karnataka were found eligible. National Scheme Sanctioning Committee has approved 60 eligible

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

proposals of Karnataka. As per the Swajaldhara Guidelines excluding community contribution of 10% or 5% as the case may be, the Government of India would fund the balance cost of the water supply scheme.

Fluoride affected villages in Karnataka

2299. SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that high fluoride content drinking water has disabled villagers in many parts of the State of Karnataka;

(b) if so, the details of persons affected due to consumption of high fluoride content water, district-wise in the State for the past three years;

(c) whether Government propose to make alternative supply of drinking water for the villages affected by fluoride contained water; and

(d) If so, the details of the proposals and the estimated cost thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL): (a) and (b) As reported by the State Government, 5838 habitations in 27 districts of Karnataka have fluoride contamination in drinking water affecting the inhabitants. The survey conducted in July 2000 in Nidasoshi village and another survey conducted in Keerunayaka Thanda village of Gulbarga district in 2002 have shown 7 and 18 persons affected by skeletal fluorosis respectively. This disability cannot be solely attributed to fluoride content in drinking water alone.

(c) and (d) Rural drinking water is a State subject. State Governments take up schemes/projects for providing drinking water in rural areas from their own resources. Government of India supplements the efforts of the State Governments and provides financial assistance under Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP). Under ARWSP, upto 15% of the allotted funds can be utilised to tackle water quality problem which *inter-alia* includes providing safe drinking water free from fluoride contamination.

Government of India had been sanctioning projects under Sub Mission Programme for providing safe drinking water free from brackishness,